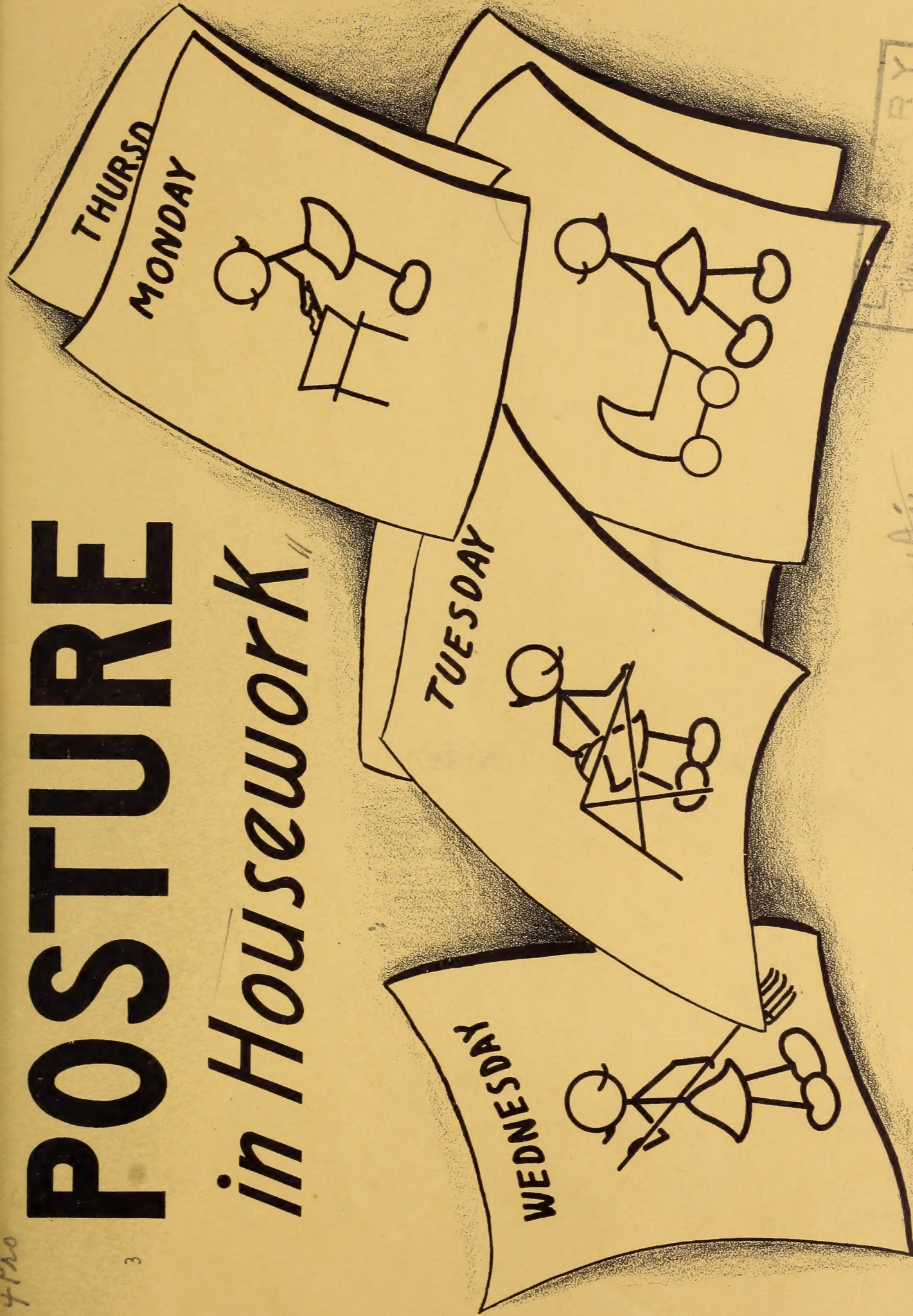


Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

POSTURE

in Housework



PA-186

Formerly AIS NO. 83

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

DEC 29 1951

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Posture in Housework¹

USING your body correctly helps you to get your work done more efficiently. Industrial engineers and others have found this to be true in the factory as well as in the home.

Good posture in housework will help you to—

1. Eliminate fatigue.
2. Improve your looks.
3. Get rid of nervous tensions and irritability.

You can attain good posture in housework by—

1. Using your body correctly.
2. Having the correct working heights.
3. Using the correct tool.
4. Eating foods that build healthy muscle.

If, when doing housework, you use your body correctly and take a few minutes to rest from time to time, you will be less tired. The United States Army has discovered by repeated tests that men can march better and hold up longer if they throw down their packs and rest 10 minutes out of every hour. So the Army forces them to do just that. To rest often and rest before you get tired are as important to you, a homemaker, as they are to a soldier.

The posture charts that follow are based on research findings.

¹ The material in this publication was assembled by Mary Rokahr, in charge, Home Economics Section, Division of Subject Matter, Extension Service, and Helen S. Holbrook, housing specialist, Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, Agricultural Research Administration. The art work was done by Margaret F. Madden, Division of Extension Information, Extension Service.

ENERGY EXPENDITURE PER HOUR UNDER DIFFERENT CONDITIONS OF MUSCULAR ACTIVITY¹

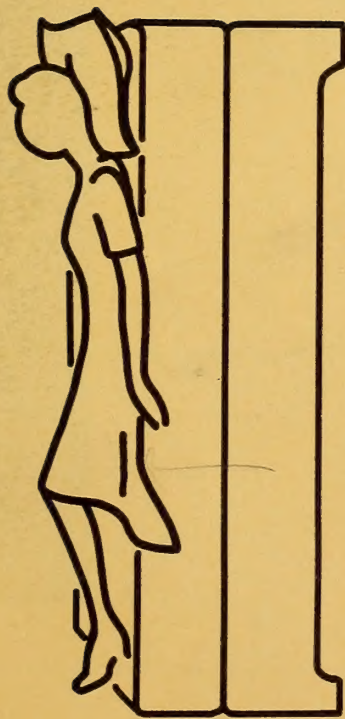
Form of activity	Energy used per hour for each pound of body weight	Increase over energy used in lying still
Awake, lying still	Calories 0.5	Percent 0
Sitting, at rest	.65	30
Standing—		
Relaxed	.69	38
At attention	.74	48
Sewing ²	.74	48
Knitting	.75	50
Driving automobile	.86	72
Dishwashing	.93	86
Ironing ³	.93	86
Light laundering	1.04	108
Sweeping ⁴	1.09	118
Walking—		
2.6 miles an hour	1.30	160
3.75 miles an hour	1.95	290
Downstairs	2.36	372
Upstairs	7.18	1,336

¹ From Essentials of Nutrition. Sherman, H. C., and Lanford, C. S. 418 pp., illus. New York, Macmillan Co. 1940. Data apply to healthy adult people. (See p. 77.)

² With foot-driven machine. Adapted from Foundations of Nutrition. Rose (Swartz), M. D. 4th ed. revised by Grace MacLeod, and Clara Mae Taylor, 594 pp., illus. pl. New York, Macmillan Co. 1944. (See p. 58.)

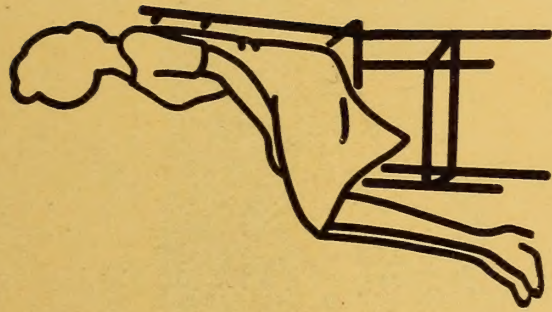
³ With 5-pound iron.

⁴ Bare floor, with broom.



LYING DOWN

requires the least energy.



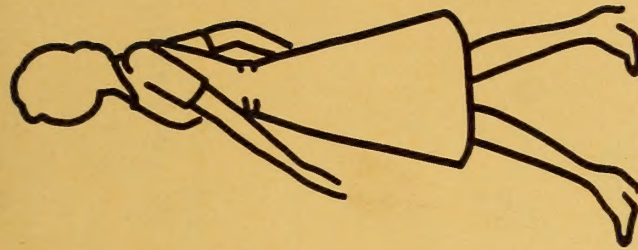
SITTING

requires 30 per-cent more energy than lying down.



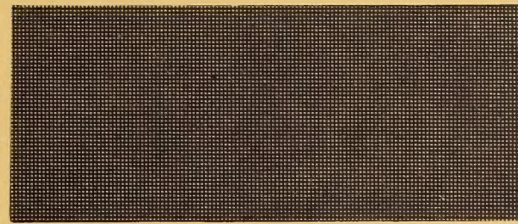
STANDING

requires 38 per-cent more energy than lying down.



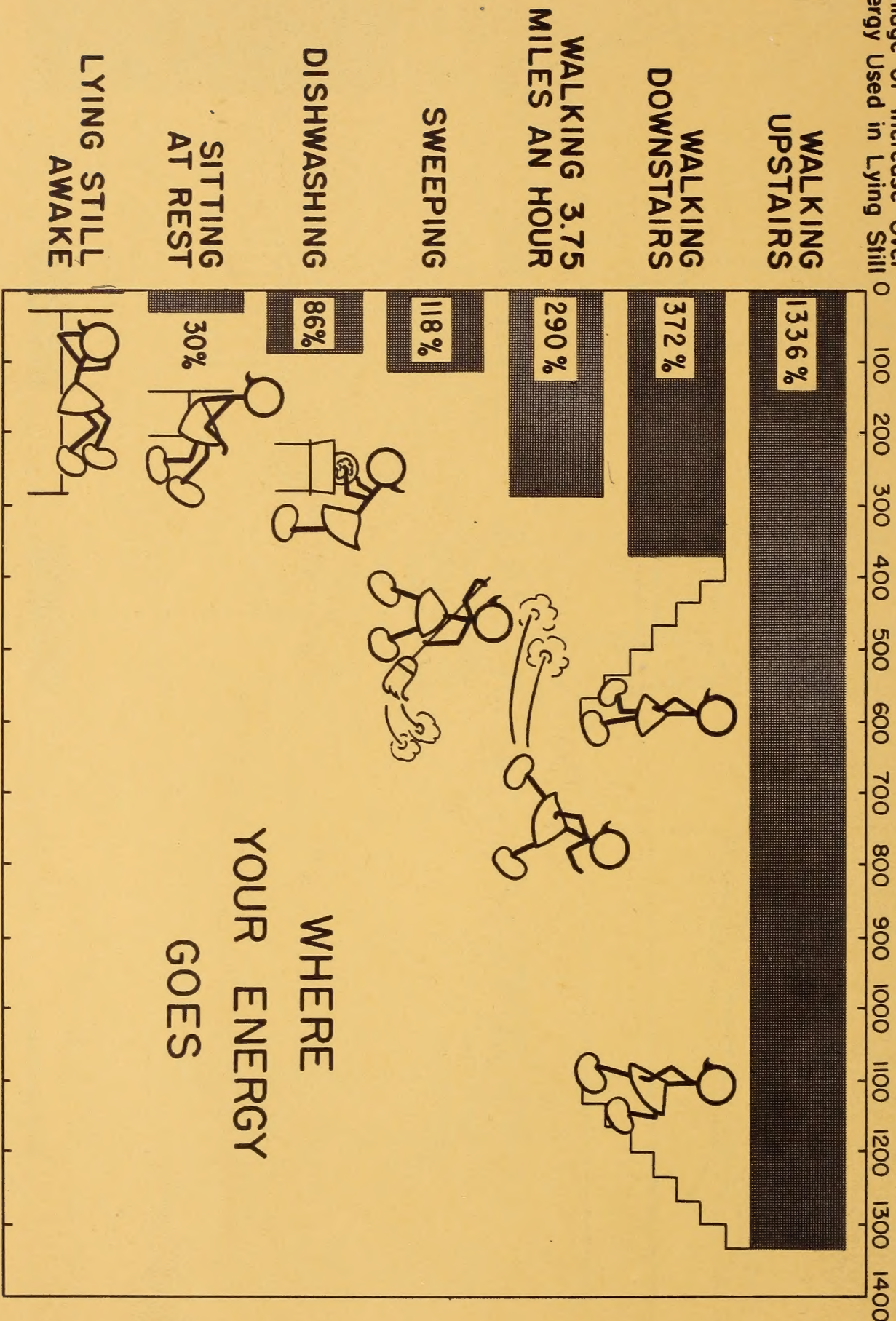
WALKING

requires 290 per-cent more energy than lying down.



Energy Required for Various Postures

Percentage of Increase Over
Energy Used in Lying Still



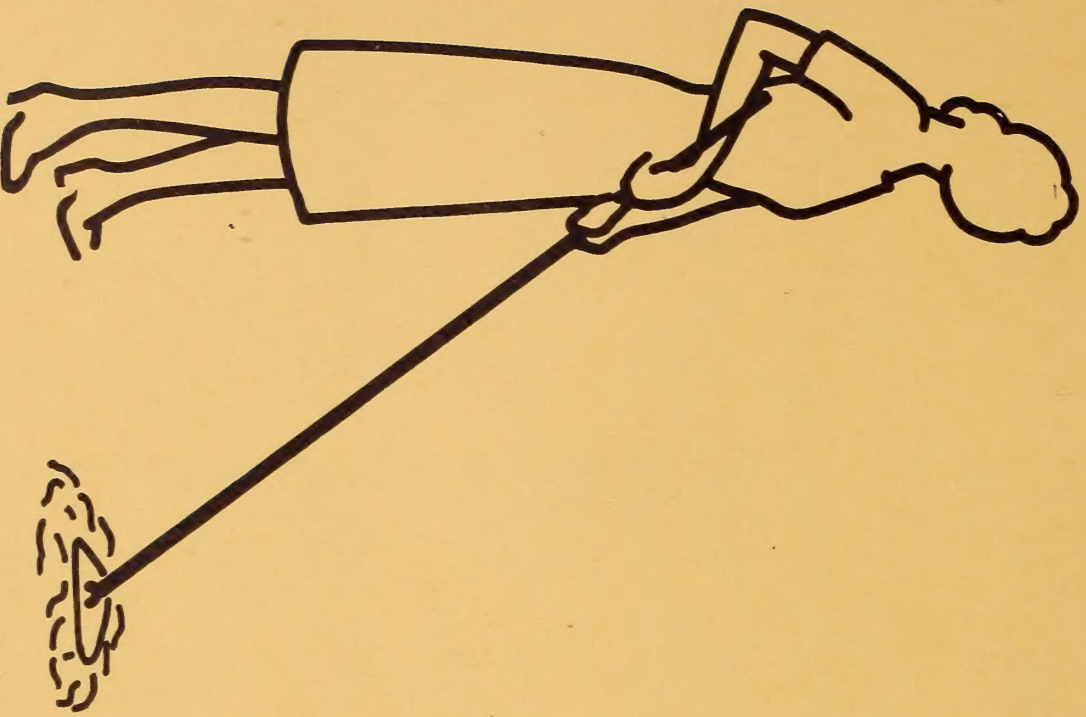
USE BODY CORRECTLY

STANDING: Head, neck, chest, abdomen, balanced vertically. Weight borne by bony framework. Minimum strain on muscles and ligaments.

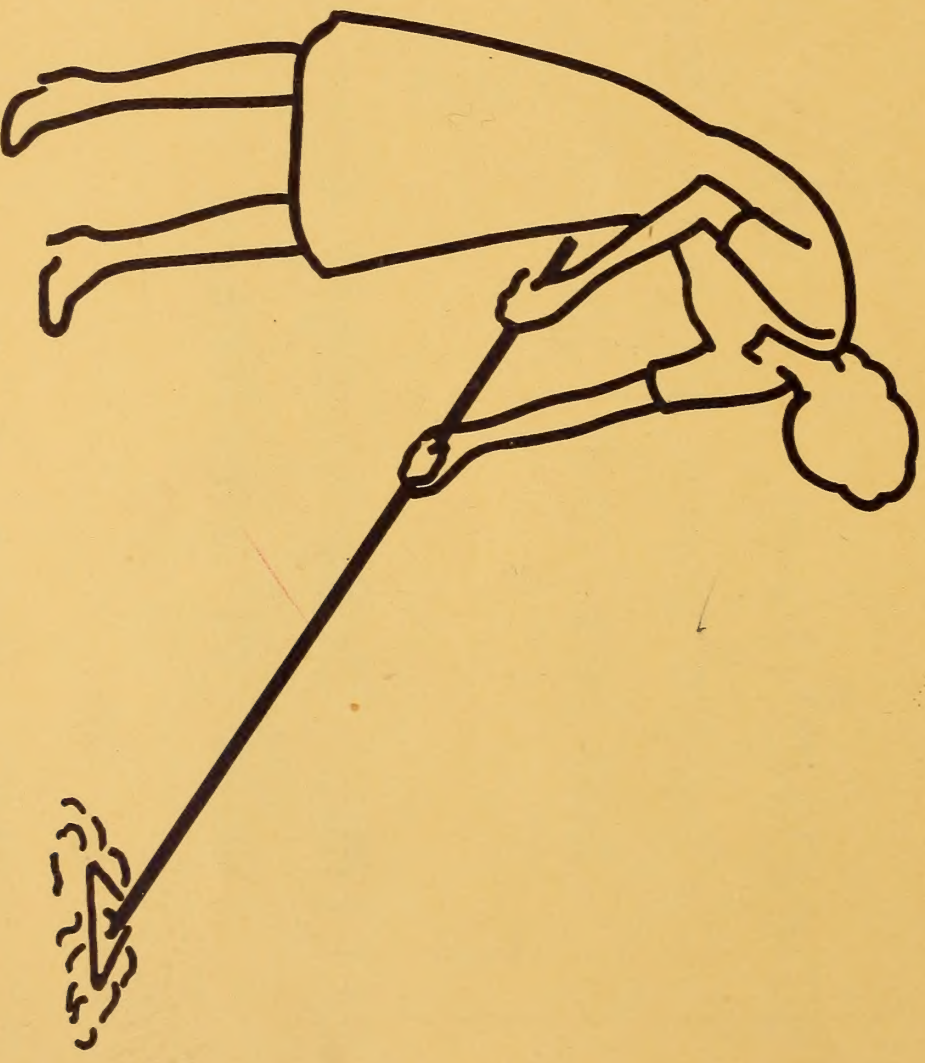
SITTING: Body straight from hips to neck. No flex or bend at waistline.

BENDING: Bend at knees or hips, not back.

This-

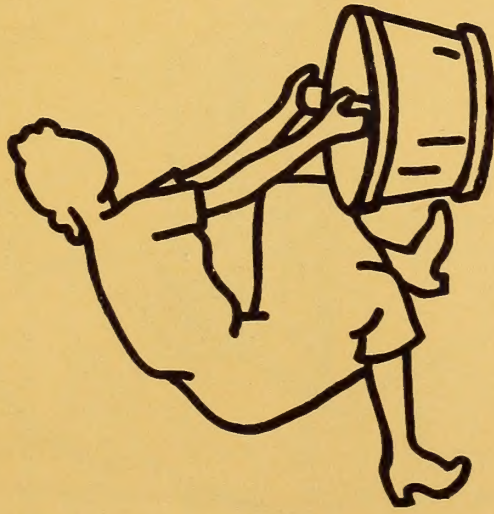


Not this

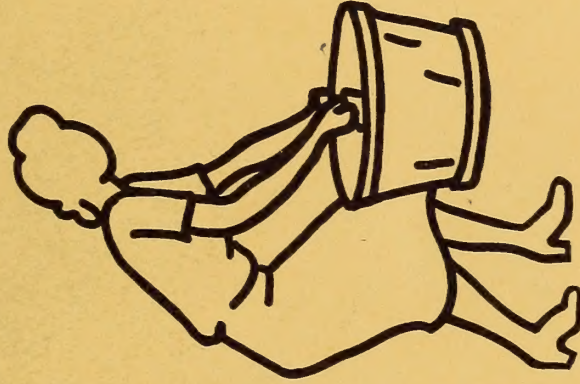


Back bending is back breaking.

This-

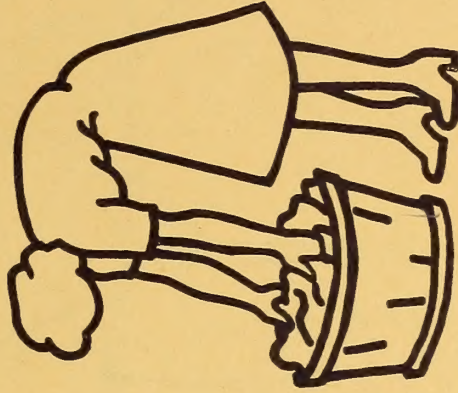


Step 1.



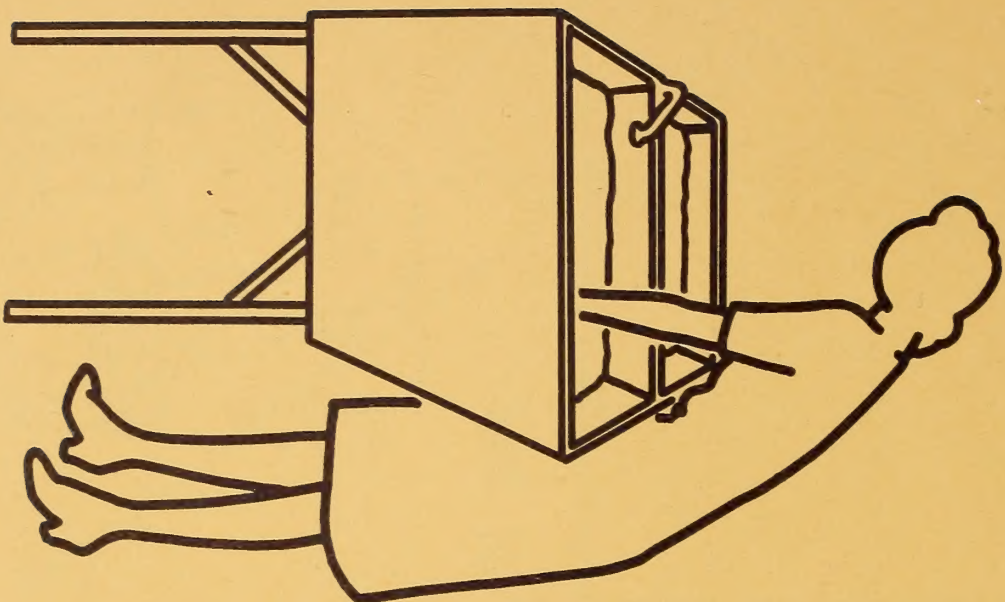
Step 2.

Not this

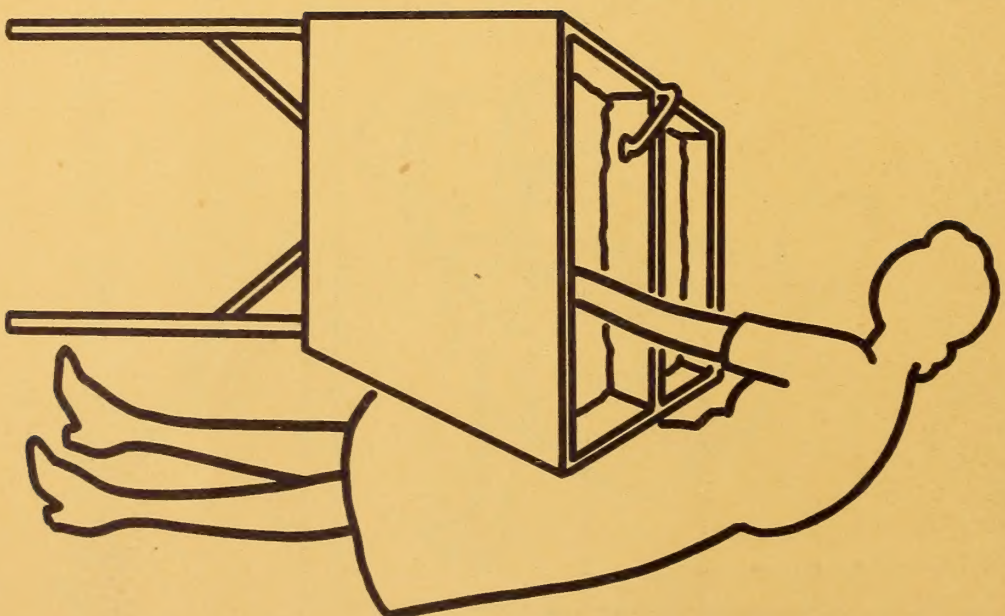


Use leg and shoulder muscles.

This -



Not this

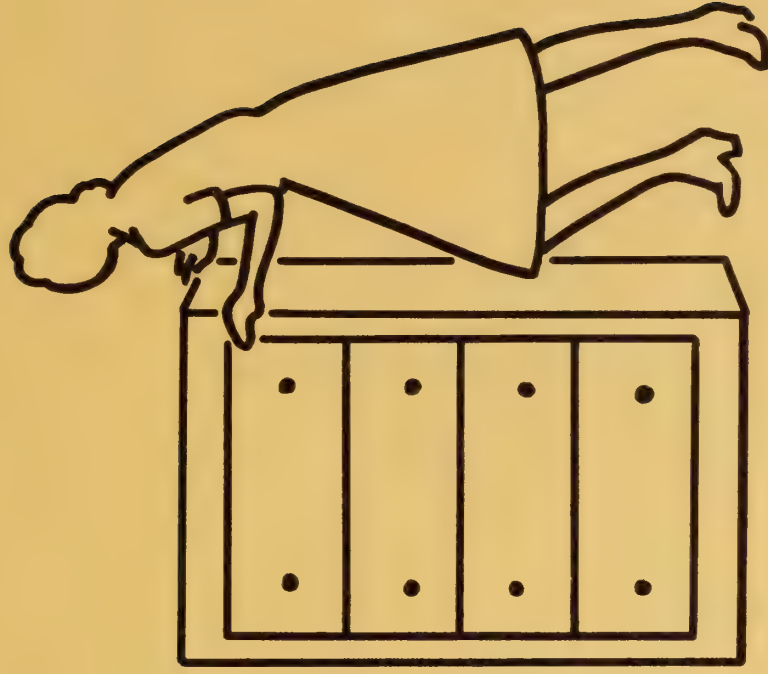


Bend at hips; save the back.

This-



Not this



Use whole body at center of weight to be moved.

This-



Not this



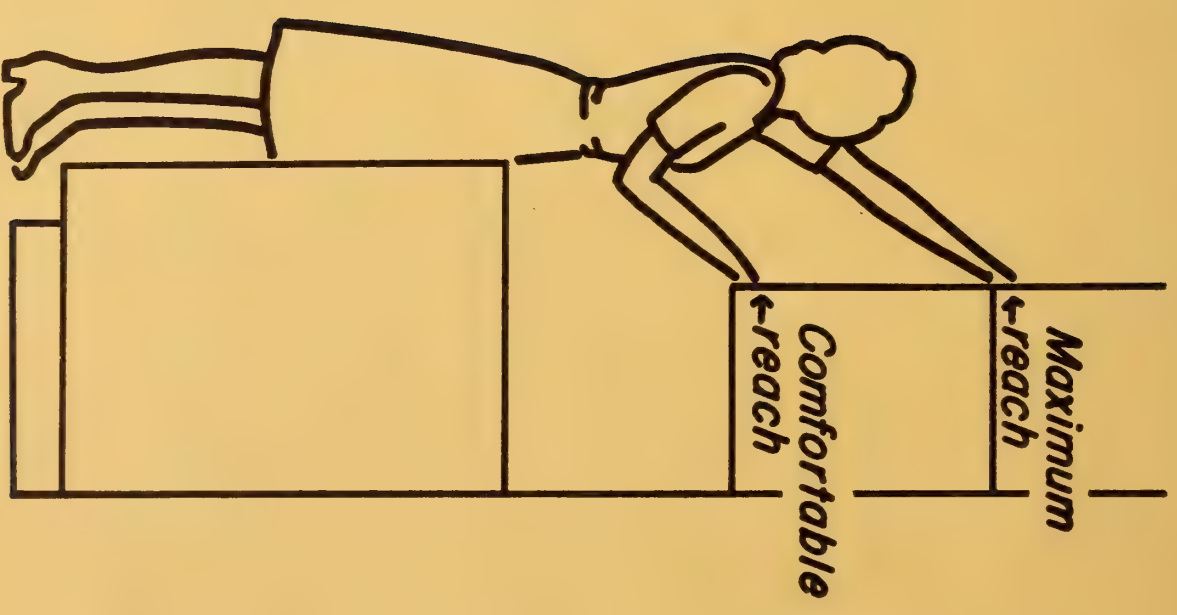
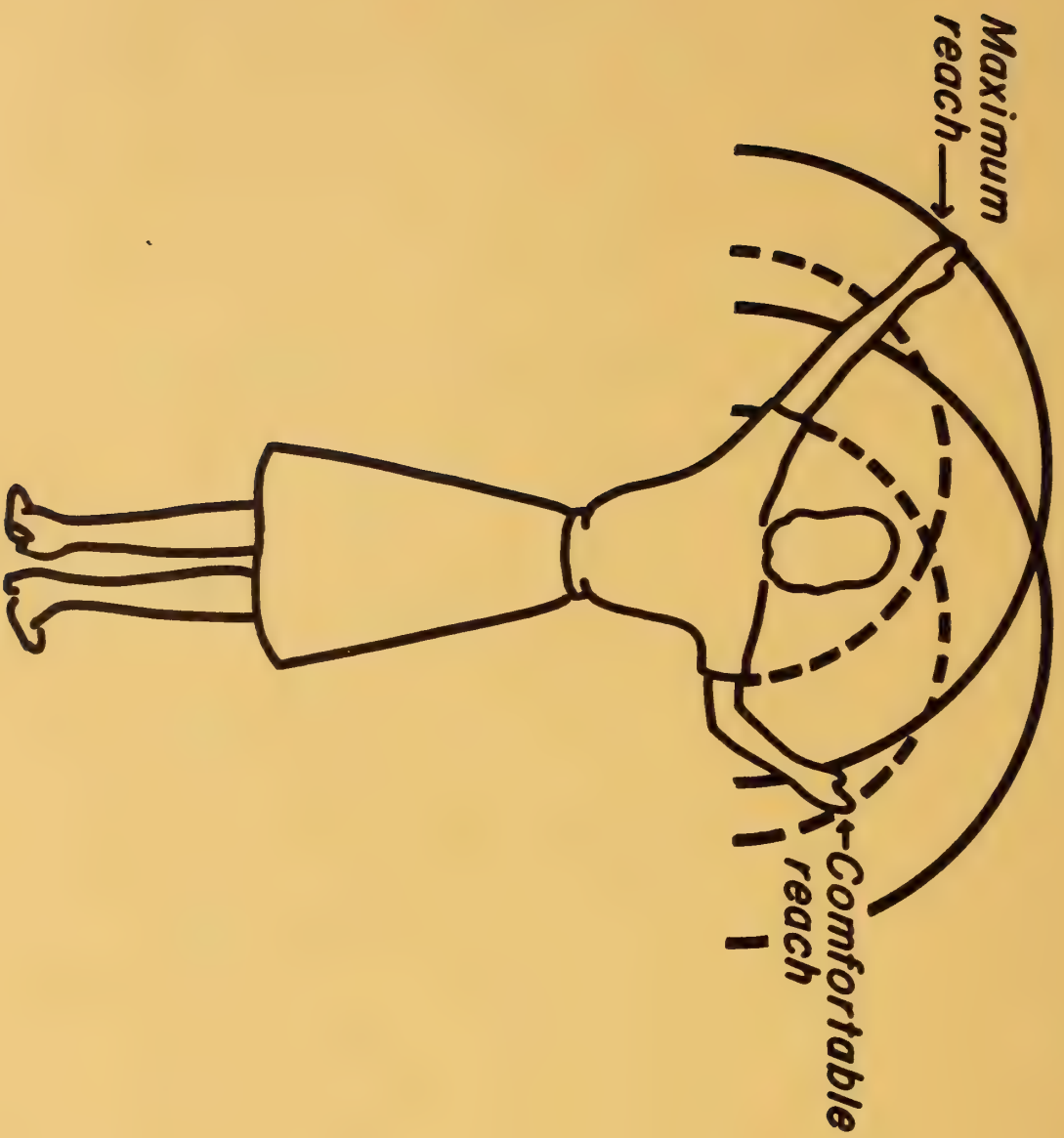
Substitute leg muscles for back muscles.

CORRECT WORKING HEIGHTS MEAN GOOD POSTURE

Stand erect.

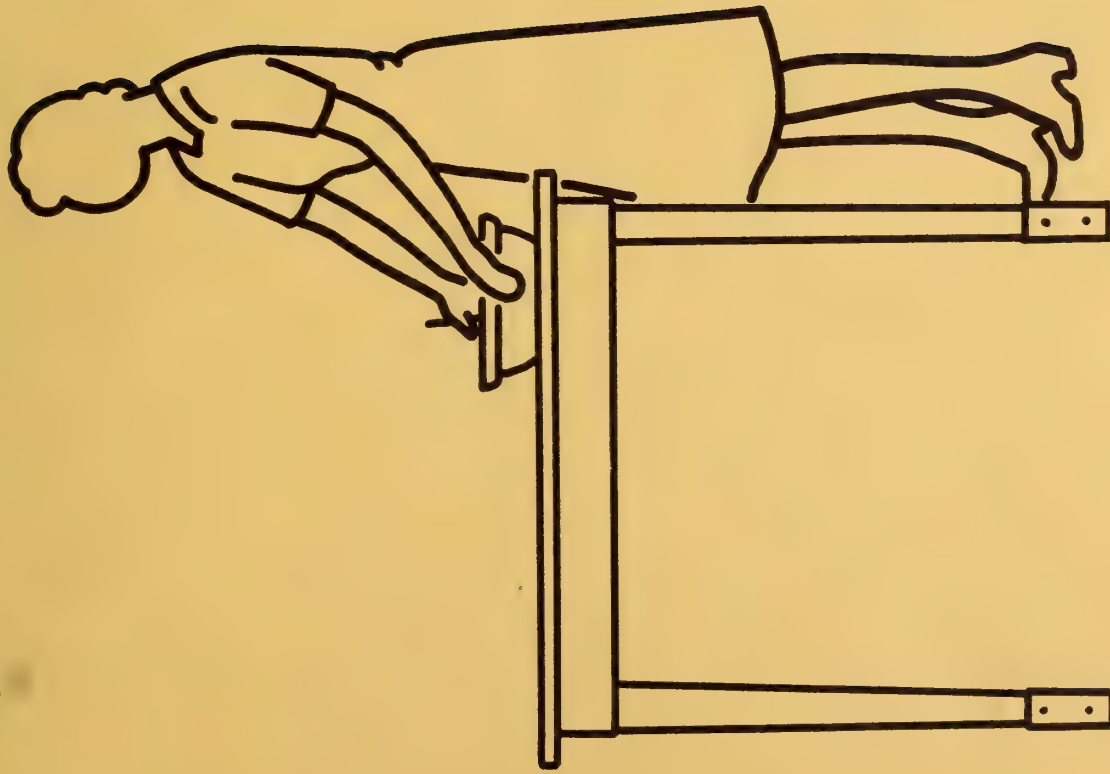
Sit to work whenever possible.

Keep things within easy reach.

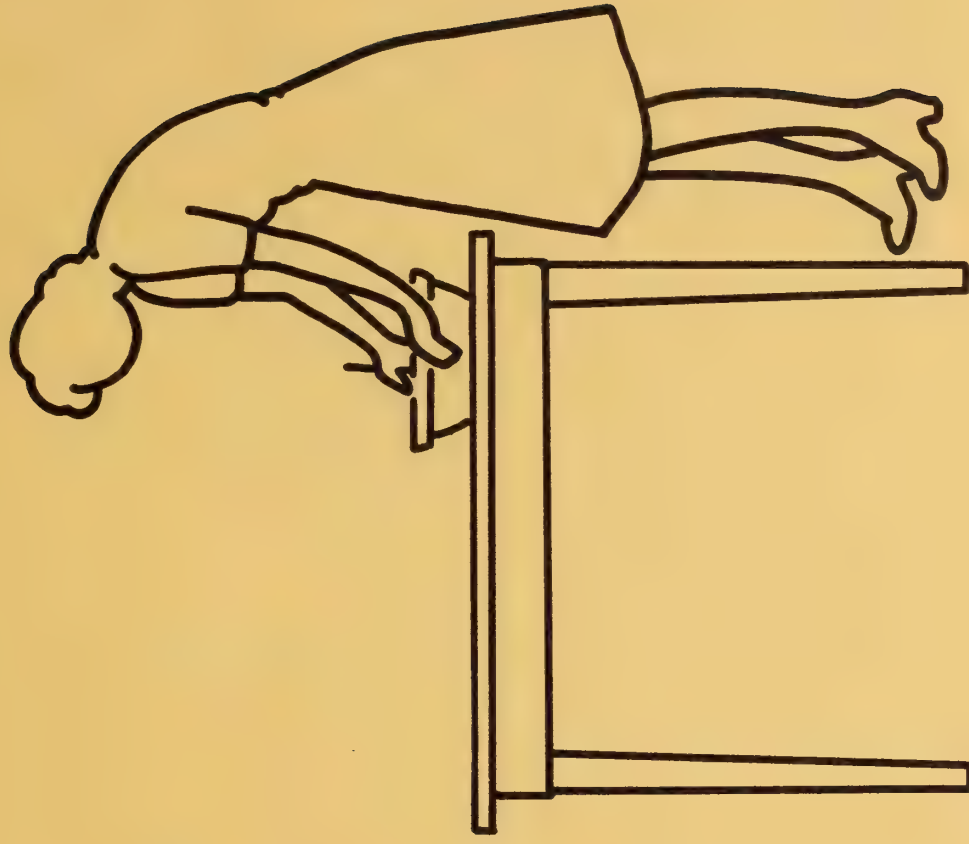


Stretching is fatiguing.

This-

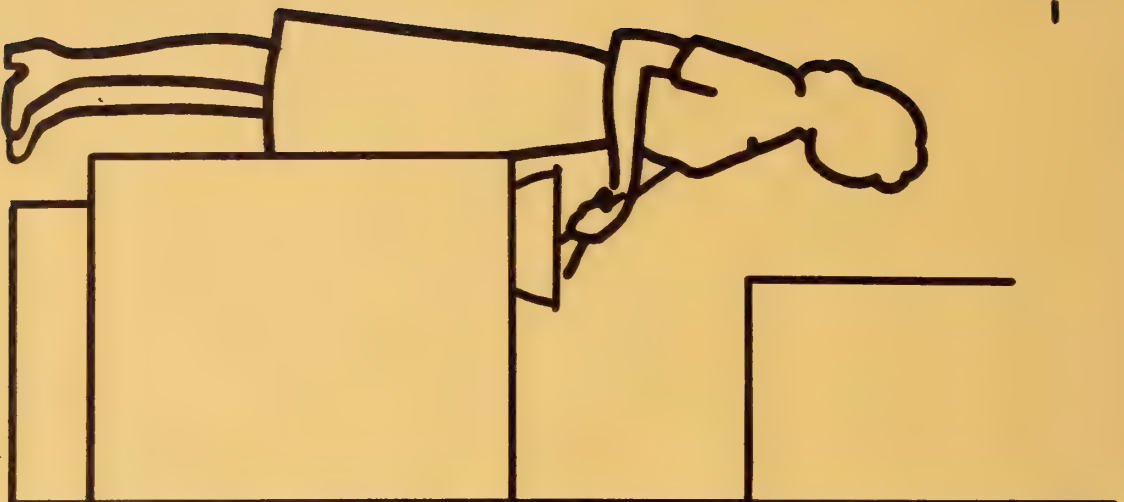


Not this

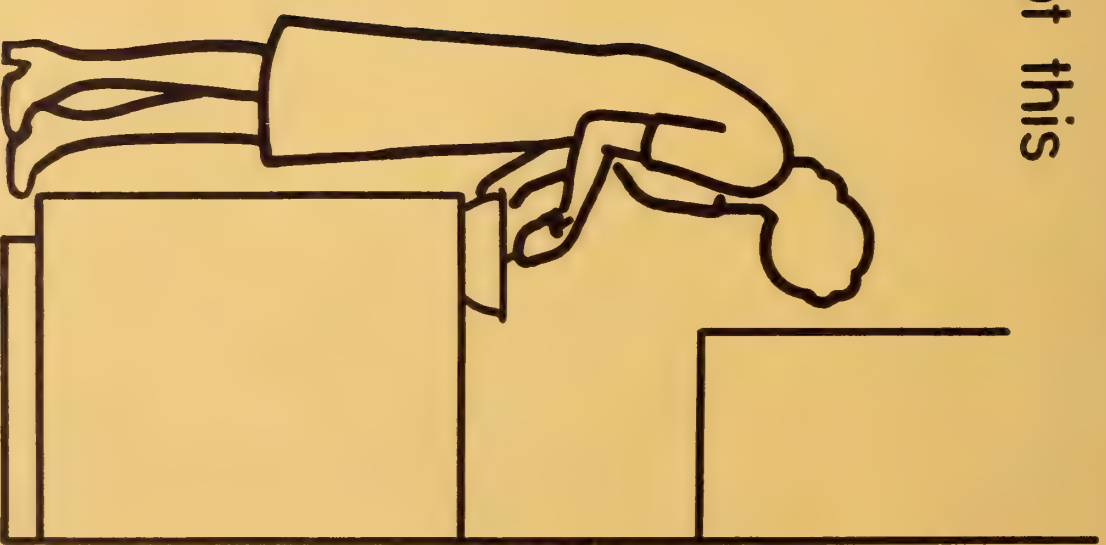


Height of table affects posture.

This-

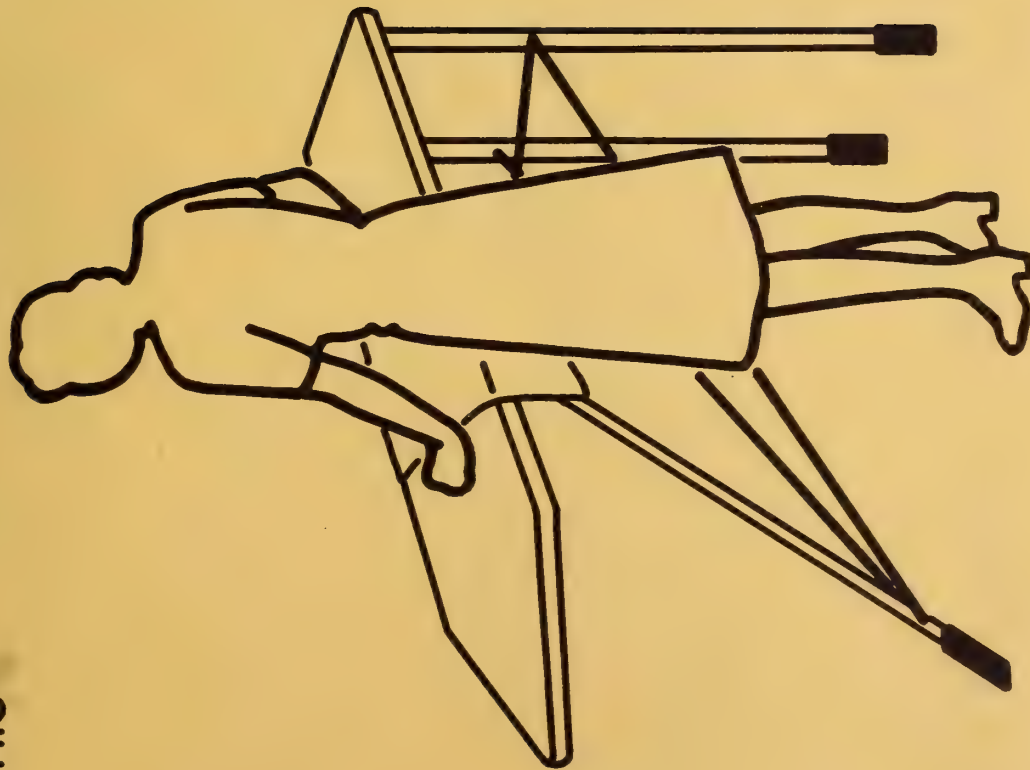


Not this

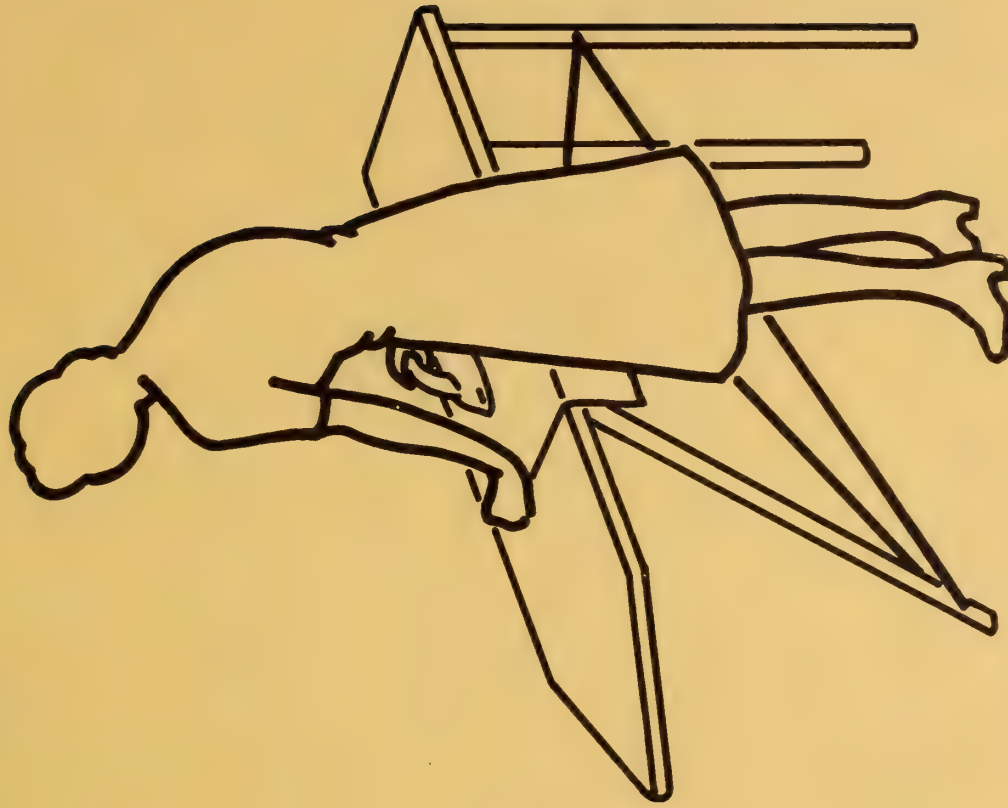


Height of working surface affects posture.

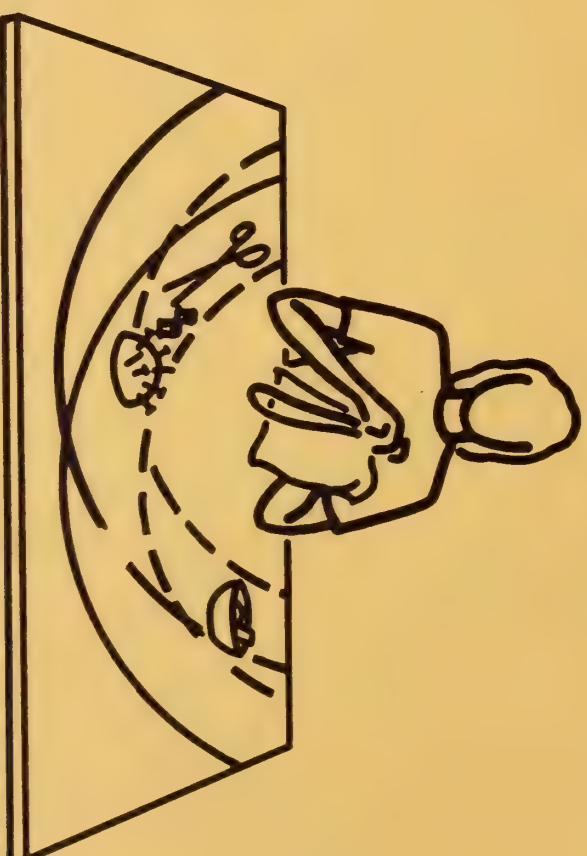
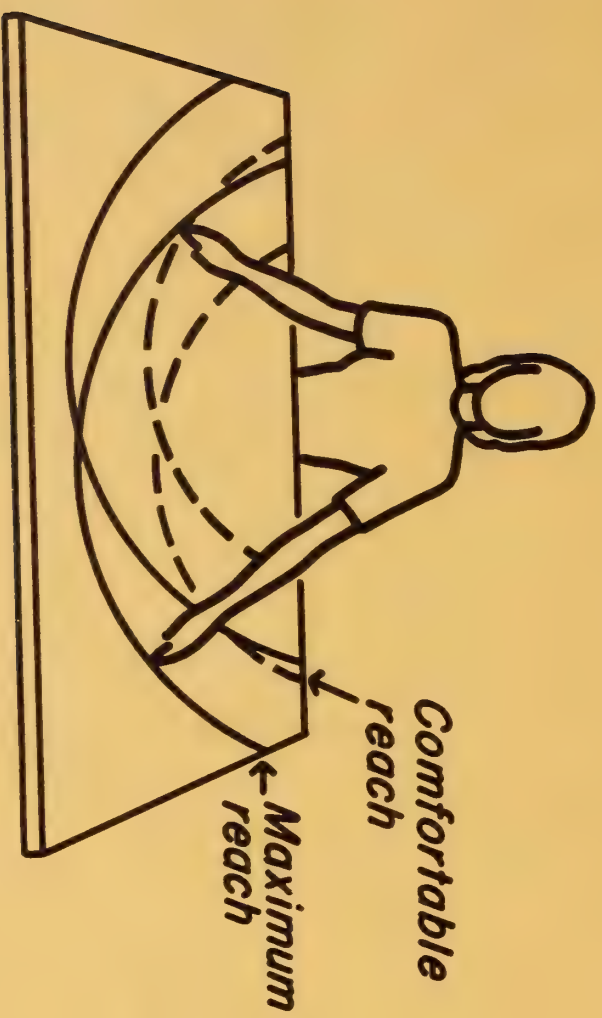
This-



Not this

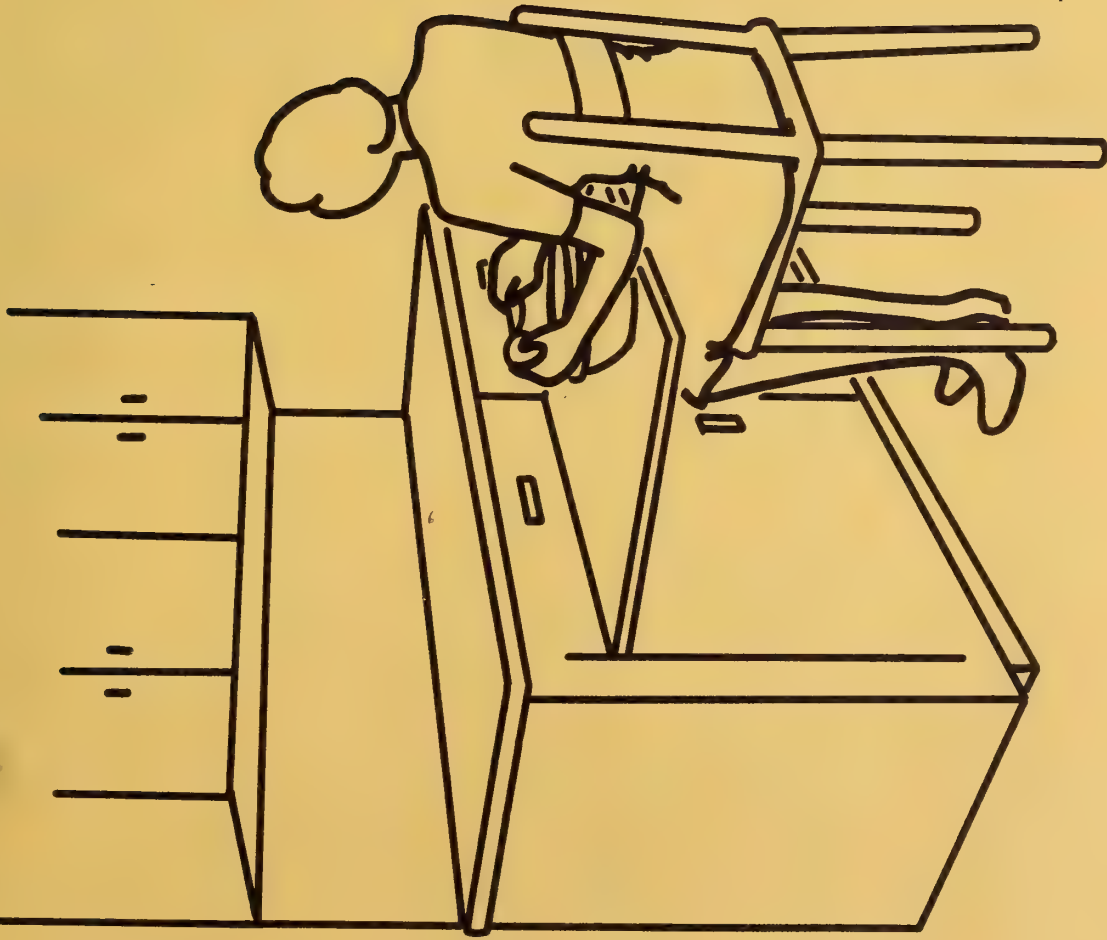


Correct height makes ironing easier.

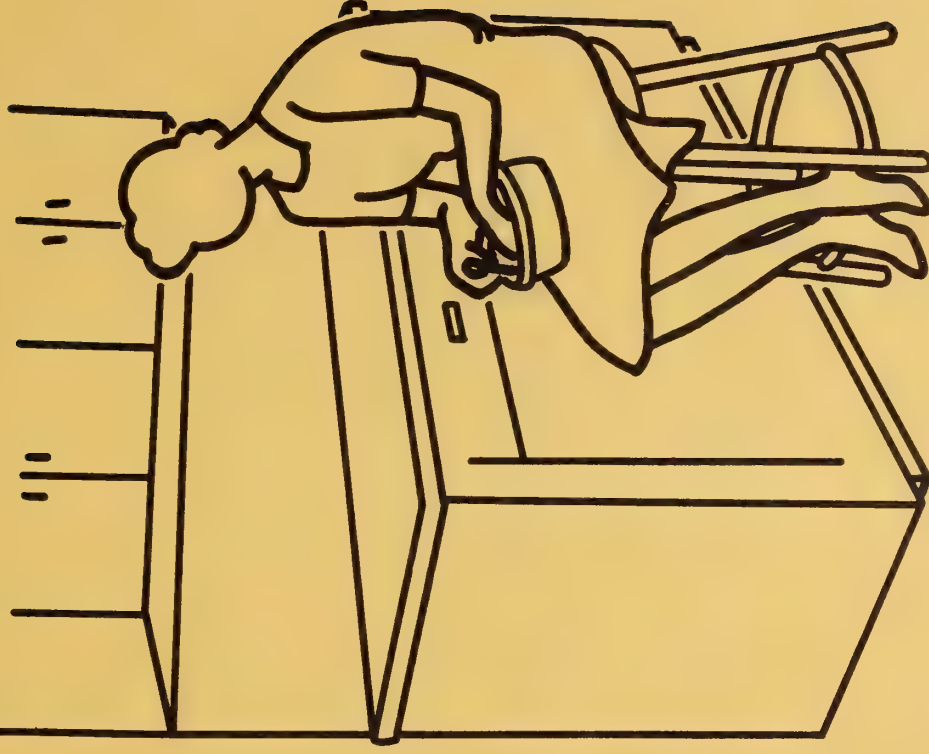


Keep things within easy reach.

This-



Not this



Sitting saves energy.

USE CORRECT TOOL FOR GOOD POSTURE

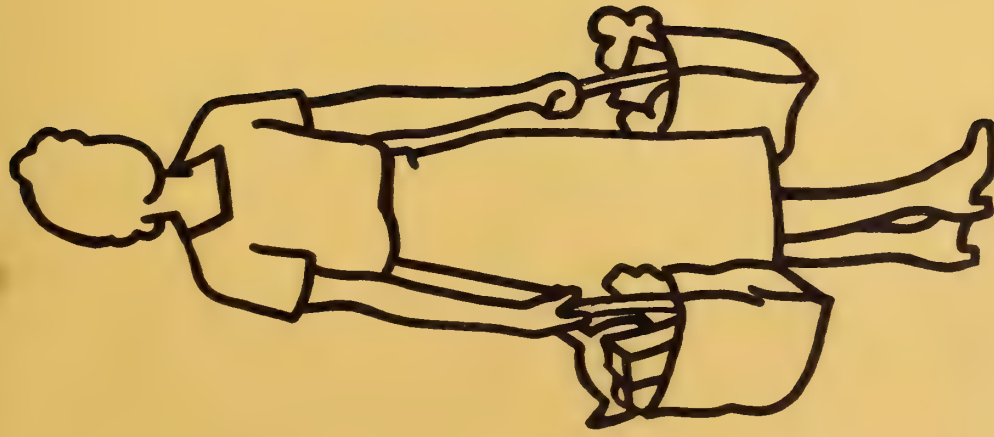
Choose long-handled equipment to avoid bending.

Use racks in sinks and on tables, if work surfaces are too low; or extension to legs under work surfaces if too low.

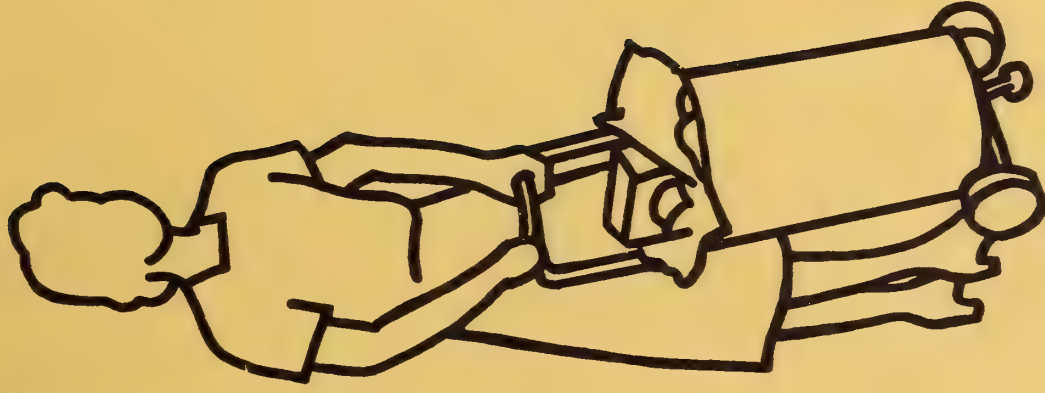
Use footstools to raise worker if work surface too high.

Use table on casters, cart, or tray to move large quantities or heavy objects.

This-



Or this-

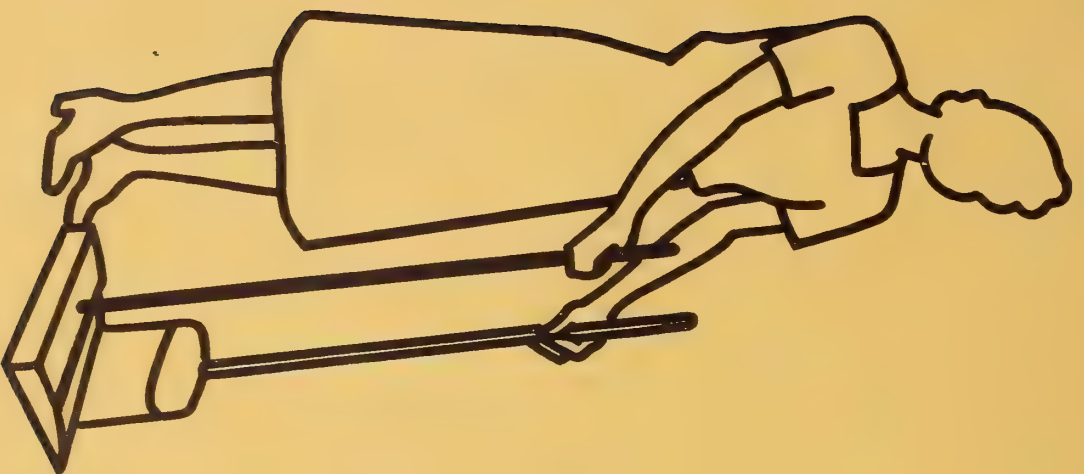


Not this



Keep body in balance.

This-

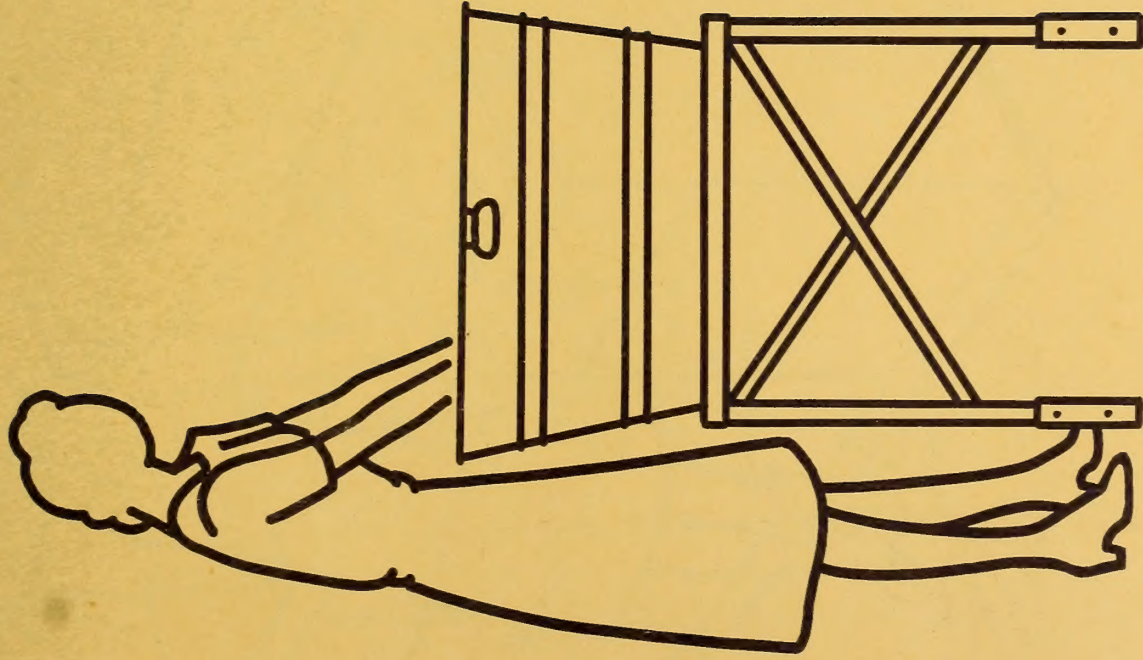


Not this

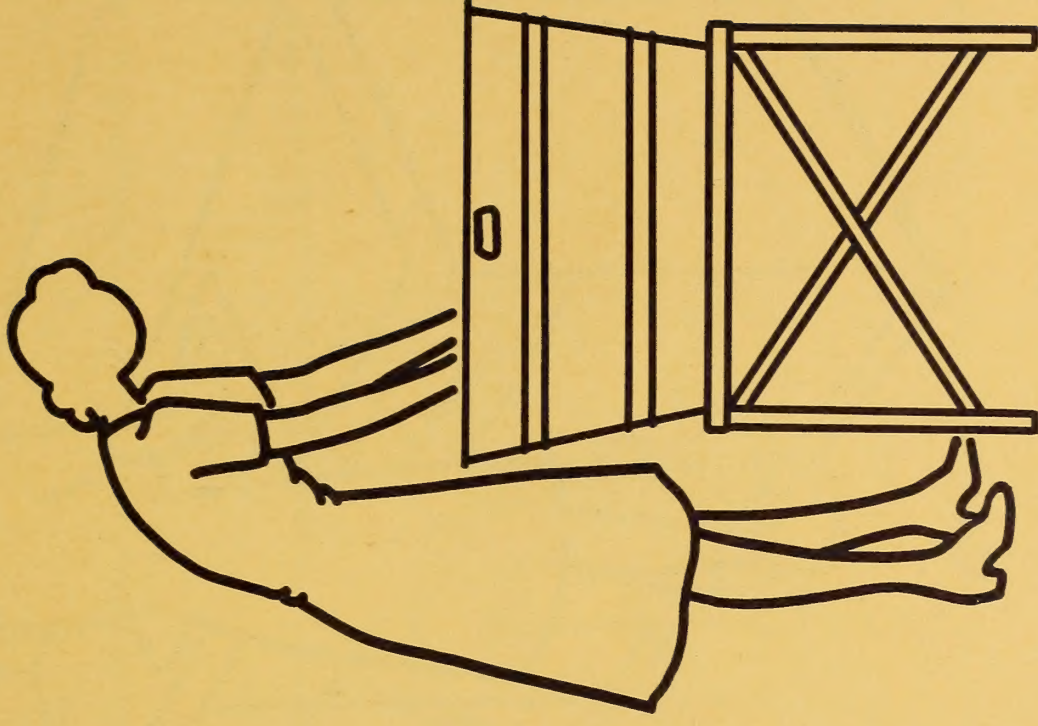


Use the best tool for the task.

This-

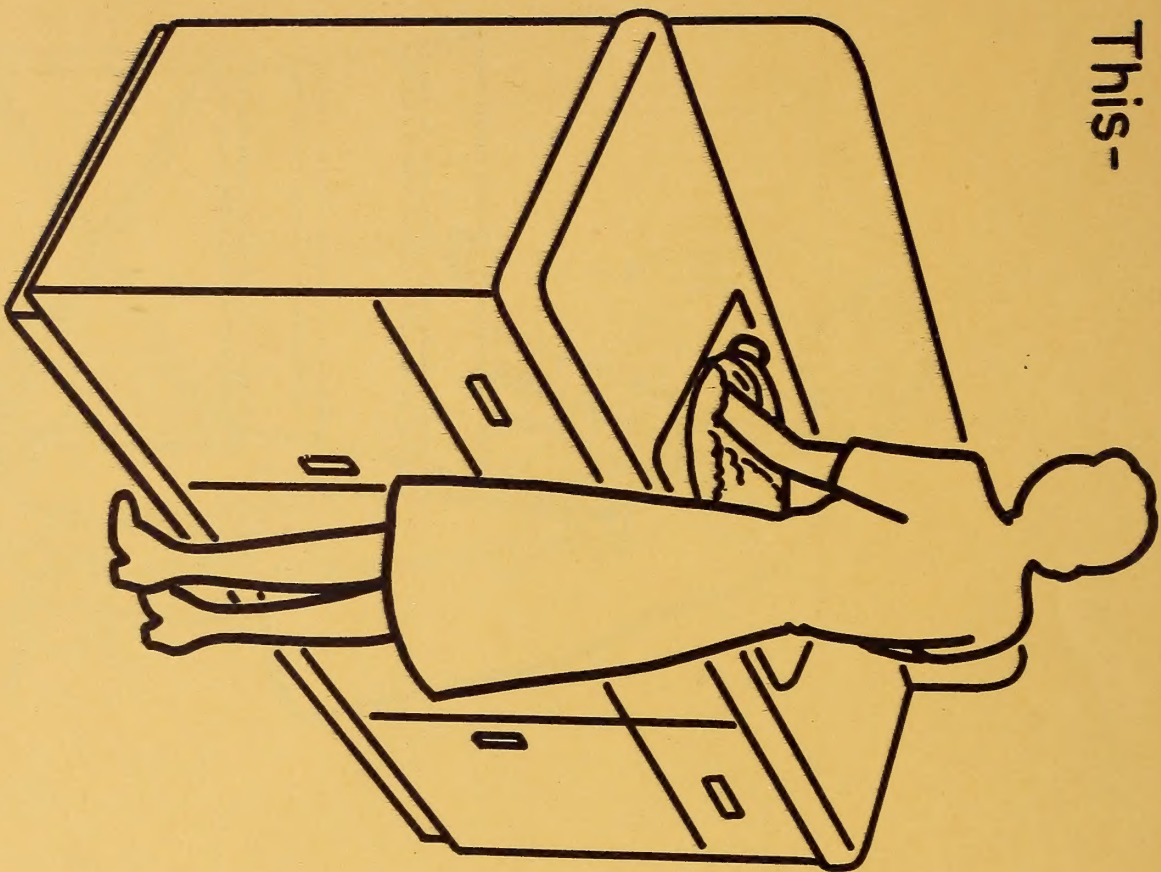


Not this



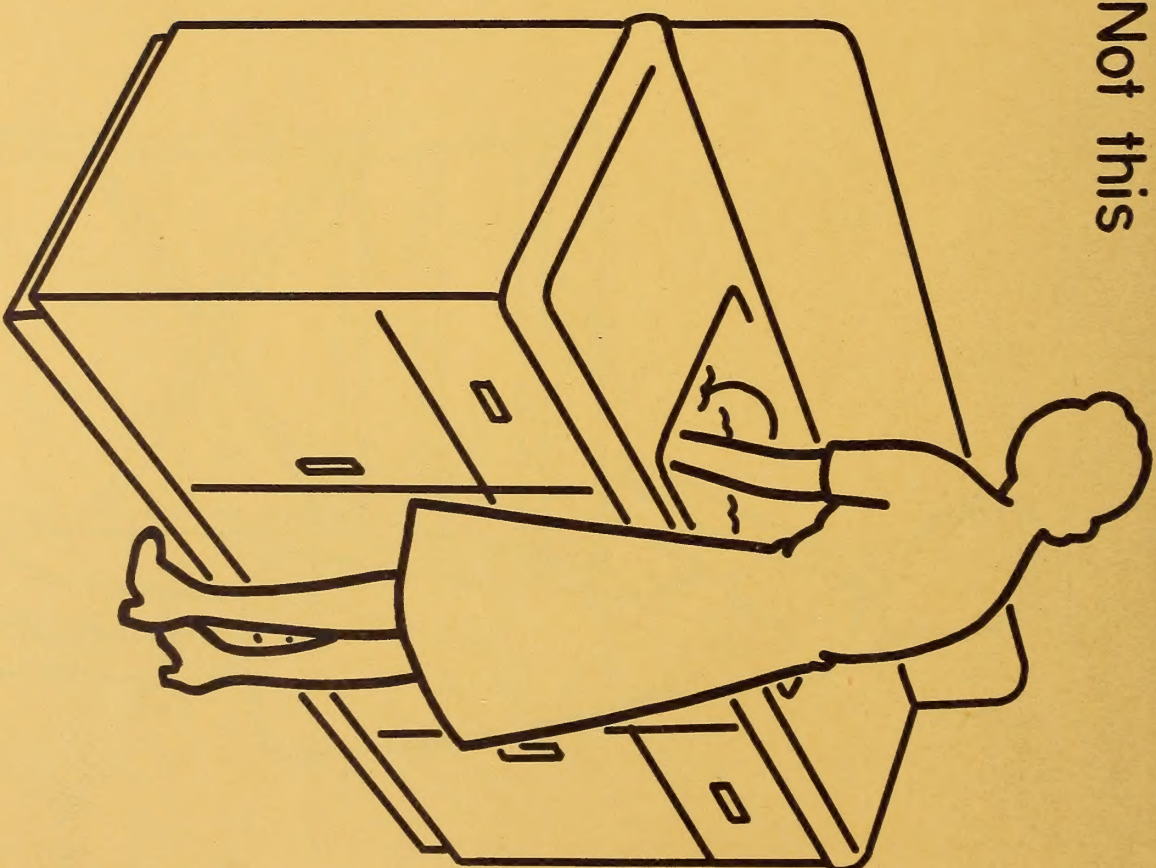
High tubs improve posture.

This-

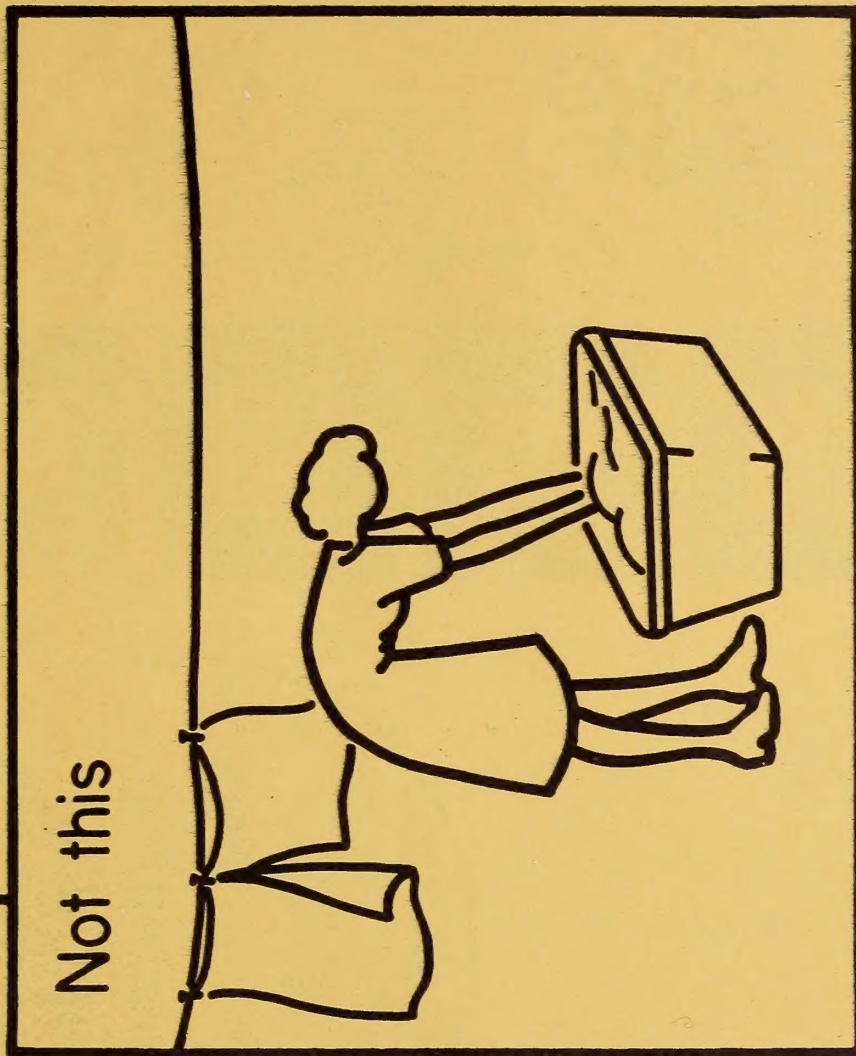
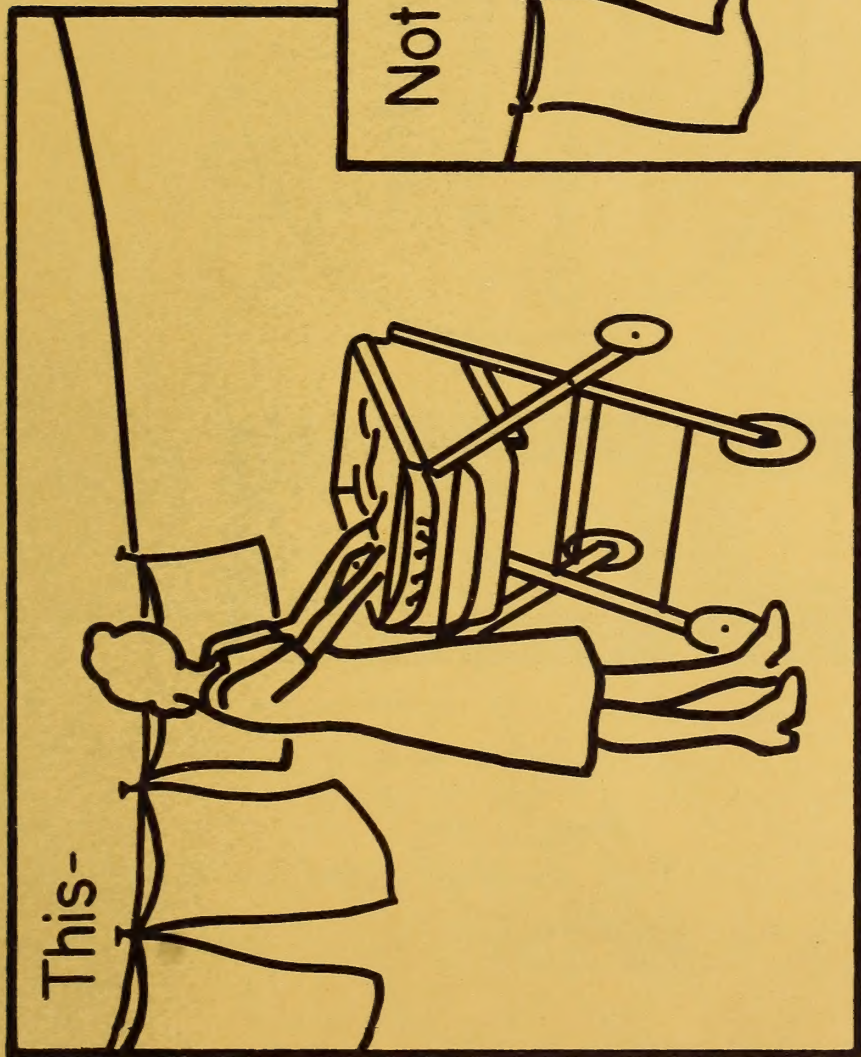


Raise dishpan
for erect posture.

Not this

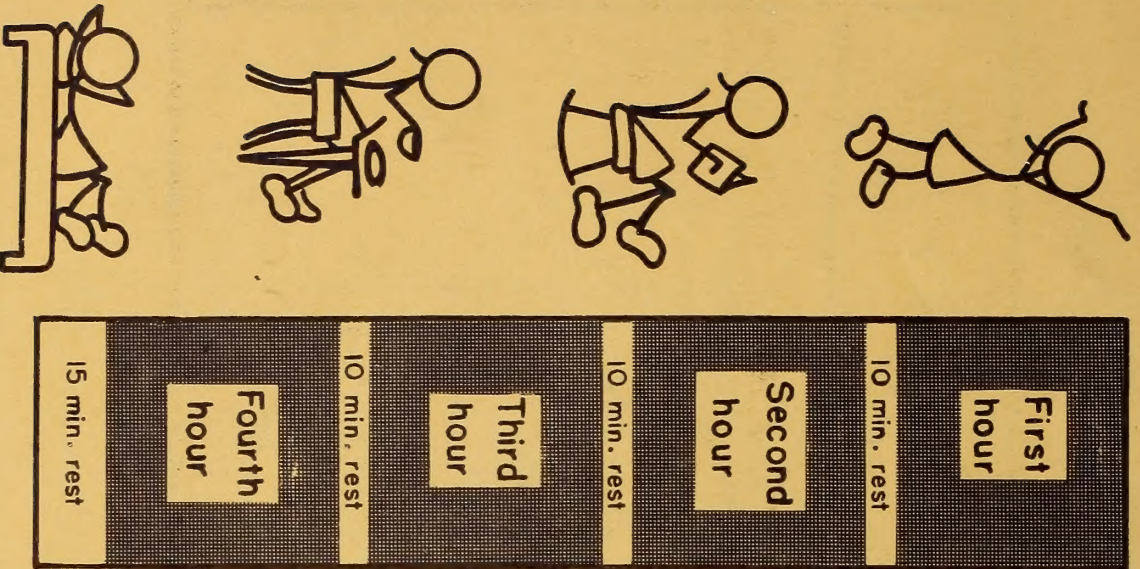


Low sink makes for
sagging shoulders.



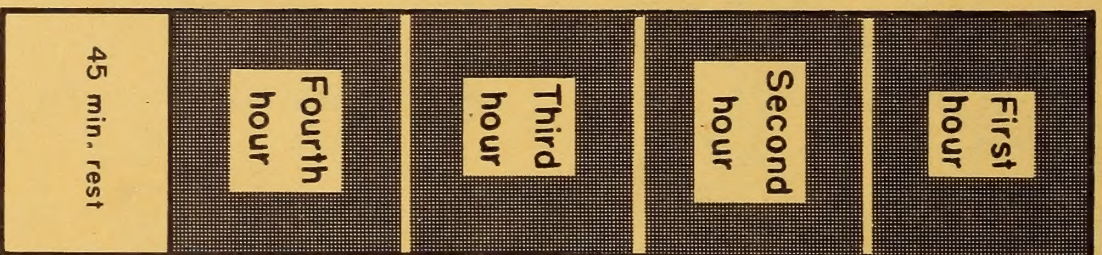
Use of labor-saving equipment improves posture.

This-



Rest often
if you have
4 hours housework
to do.

Not this



Rest before you get tired.